



To: CINMS Advisory Council

From: Linda Krop, Conservation Representative

Re: Conservation Working Group Report, 7/1/05

The Conservation Working Group (CWG) met on June 22, 2005. Members present: Linda Krop, Chair (Environmental Defense Center); Greg Helms, Vice Chair (The Ocean Conservancy); Jean Holmes (League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara); Al Sanders (Sierra Club); Jessica Altstatt (Santa Barbara Channelkeeper).

Other participants included Shiva Polefka (EDC Research Fellow), Sara Polgar (EDC intern), Alison Eastley (EDC intern), Tracey Duffy (CA Coastal Commission); John Kuizenga. CINMS Staff: Chris Mobley, Sarah MacWilliams.

I. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made.

II. WATER QUALITY

EDC intern Alison Eastley presented the draft "Public Outreach & Education" section of the Water Quality Needs Assessment. This section is divided into three areas of discussion: (1) Mainland Programs – Predominantly Onshore Water Quality; (2) Harbor, Vessel Traffic & Predominantly Offshore Water Quality; and (3) Parks & Sanctuary Water Quality. Some of the meeting participants added information to the draft report or offered to meet with Alison separately to ensure an up-to-date and complete assessment of current public outreach and education efforts that address water quality in the Sanctuary. As part of the report, we will clarify programs in which the Sanctuary already has a role.

EDC Research Fellow Shiva Polefka and EDC interns Sara Polgar and Alison Eastley announced that they are finalizing our overall assessment of "Gaps" in water quality research and monitoring, regulations and policies, and outreach and education. They are also preparing draft "Recommendations" that identify priorities for potential Sanctuary response to such gaps, taking into consideration the feasibility and appropriateness of Sanctuary involvement and potential for partnerships with other agencies and organizations.

Our goal is to submit a complete draft report to the Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) for presentation at its July meeting. Therefore, we will be soliciting feedback from the Conservation Working Group (CWG) and staff on these final draft sections by July 1. We will revise the draft report and attempt to send a complete version to the SAC by July 15. We would like to present the draft report at the July 22 SAC meeting, and then accept feedback from the SAC so that we can finalize the report in time for potential action at the September SAC meeting.

III. FEDERAL MARINE RESERVES

Chris Mobley and Greg Helms informed the CWG regarding the action taken by the PFMC at its June 15 meeting. We discussed the potential consequences of the PFMC recommendation to incorporate the federal marine reserves into its groundfish “essential fish habitat” (EFH) regulations. Attendees raised several questions, including a concern as to whether groundfish EFH can extend to other fish species. We also discussed potential implications for marine reserves management, monitoring and enforcement if the PFMC is to have jurisdiction instead of the CINMS. Chris informed us that the Sanctuary and NOAA are still analyzing the potential differences that exist in managing marine reserves under the Magnuson Act versus the National Marine Sanctuaries Act. Chris also mentioned that the CINMS continues to request PFMC assistance in drafting regulations for the marine reserves.

IV. □ MANAGEMENT PLAN

According to CINMS staff, we were informed that the management plan process continues to move forward in a positive manner, and that the draft plan and EIS may be released after July.

V. □ □ OTHER CINMS ADV. COUNCIL UPDATES & DISCUSSION

- A. □ □ Biogeography Study: staff is still reviewing the draft study.
- B. □ □ LNG: Al Sanders asked whether potential Sanctuary expansion would affect the LNG projects proposed offshore Oxnard. Chris responded that such projects would probably be approved before there would be any expansion of the Sanctuary boundaries.
- C. □ □ Aquaculture: We were informed that the Chevron/Hubbs application has been suspended. There are competing federal bills regarding open ocean fish farming. There is no update regarding the potential for a national marine sanctuary policy, but existing regulations could apply to any specific projects.
- D. □ □ Upcoming SAC items: In July, the SAC will receive additional presentations regarding acoustic monitoring and how it might be extended to the CINMS.

